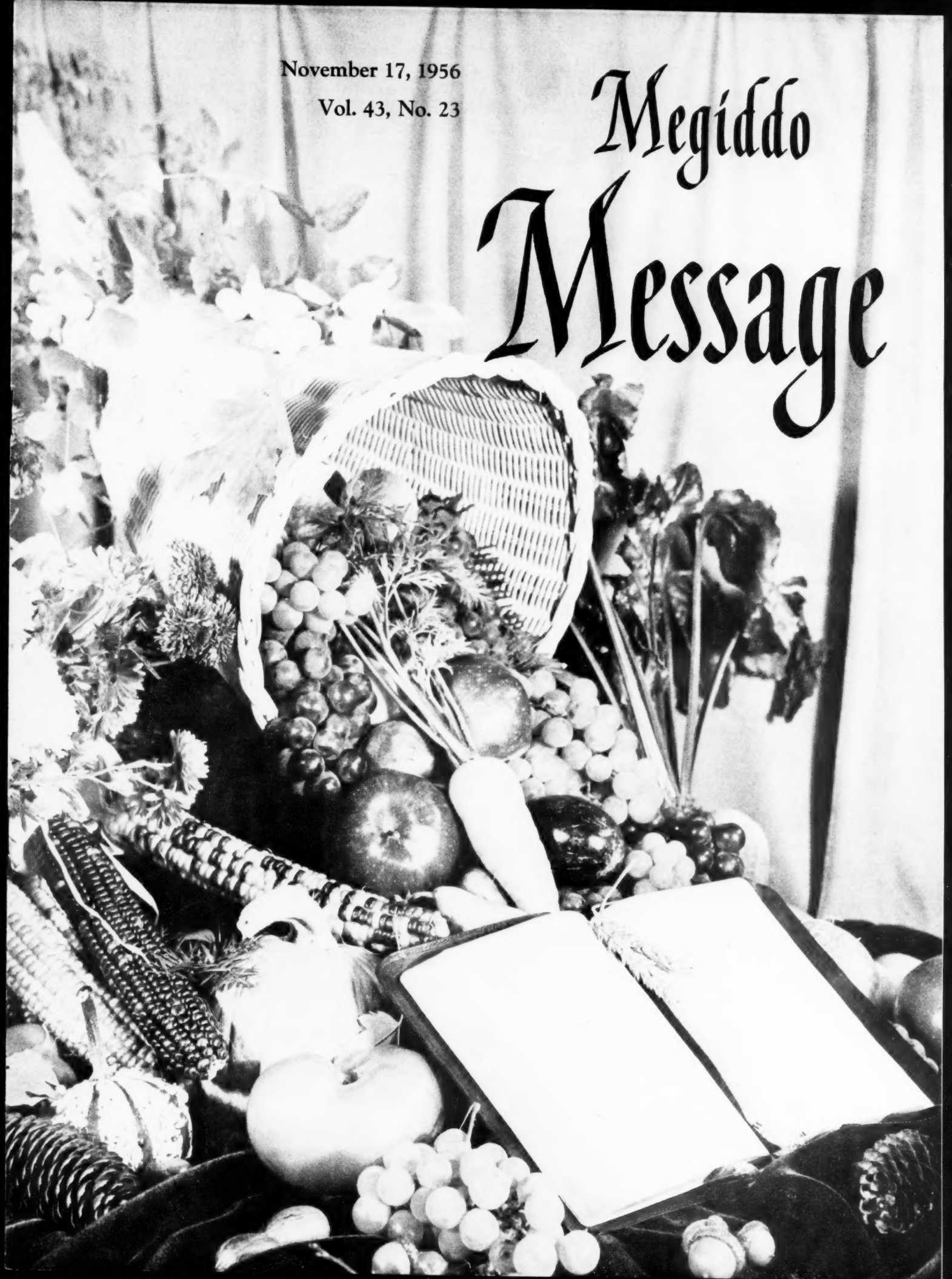


November 17, 1956

Vol. 43, No. 23

Megiddo Message



V
Z
S
F
S
E
XU

Megiddo Message

Vol. 43, No. 23 November 17, 1956

Percy J. Thatcher, Editor

A religious magazine, devoted to the cause of Christ and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone, THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE will

- Strengthen your faith in the Bible
- Answer perplexing religious questions
- Give you courage for these uncertain times
- Help you live above the world's moral corruption
- Reveal to you how to develop a character acceptable to God
- Bring peace and stability to your life

PUBLISHED every two weeks by the Megiddo Mission Church, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester 19, N. Y.

● SUBSCRIPTION RATES: One year, \$1.00; six months, 50 cents. Make checks or Money Orders for all literature payable to the Megiddo Mission Church. Please notify promptly of any change of address.

Entered as second-class matter, October 15, 1920, at the Post Office at Rochester, N. Y., under Act of March 3, 1879.

Instructive Booklets

In addition to the MESSAGE you should by all means read the following booklets. Each booklet is a complete subject of itself. The Bible is made understandable and interesting to study.

**HISTORY OF THE MEGIDDO MISSION
THE COMING OF JESUS AND ELIJAH
WHAT MUST WE DO TO BE SAVED?**

**THE KINGDOM OF GOD
THE GREAT APOSTASY
AFTER DEATH, WHAT?
HELL AND THE DEVIL
SPIRITUAL CREATION
THE HOLY SPIRIT
THE SABBATH
TRINITY**

Complete set	\$2.25
Single copies	.20
History	.40

A Service for Parents

In response to the increasing public demand we have a growing children's literature department.

Sunday School leaflets—interest-catching, attractive, colorful—are available for all, from tots to teenagers. Also several books are in circulation, which are listed below. Some of these offer not only something to read about the great characters of Bible history but something to do—a delight to eager little fingers.

Parents who have awakened to the tragic effects of comic magazines and other non-sensical attractions to the juvenile mind which radio and television are bringing into their homes, are welcoming with amazing gratitude these "helps" as a guide to high moral ideals.

Parents, teachers, guardians, yours is a great responsibility. Day after day in your home you are weaving the moral fabric of the rising generation; you are fashioning the character of tomorrow's men and women. The tender years of a child's life are when the deepest impressions can be made. Do not allow this formative period to slip by without instilling high and noble principles into your child's mind.

The Story of JOSEPH

Eighty-three interesting pages, with full-color illustrations. This story is ever new to young and old. Price .50

Bible Story Color Book

Thirty-two delightful short stories of favorite Bible characters, with illustrating pictures to color. Size 8½ by 11 inches. Instructive, entertaining. Price .50

Pictures for Busy Little Hands to Color, Cut Out and Paste

Twenty-two pages. Wholesome childhood scenes in poster pictures to be colored, cut out and assembled. Size 9 by 12 inches. Price .35

Now Ready

For the Children

Volume II — New Testament

LETTERS OF THE BIBLE

In Full Color

Help them to learn about
Jesus and His Apostles,
Paul and his travels,
and many other N. T. characters.

Price \$1.00

LETTERS

A Gem of Priceless Quality

Dear Brother:

Truth is a gem of priceless quality which we must hold securely. It has made me a freeman in mind. I am indeed happy and thankful not to be shackled any longer by the chains of superstition and a false hope.

I have tasted the meat of the kernel and I shall never again be satisfied with the chaff and husks of Christendom which could never satisfy the appetite.

I have resolved to throw away anything that will not stand up under the acid test. This means discarding nearly everything I have ever been taught; but there is no use holding fast to that which will avail nothing.

Newdale, Manitoba, Canada.

E. H.

Like Sunburst

Dear Sister:

Many thanks for your October letter. The Maranatha letters are like the sun bursting through the darkness. They keep us steadfast in the faith.

They keep our eyes open so that we can see our deep beggarly need, that teaches us to live by grace alone. They help us to kick away all the props of self-satisfaction, pride and boasting.

We cannot change the fact that time marches on but we can change the condition of our life.

Edgar, Wis.

Mrs. M. R.

A Real Help

Dear Brother:

I find your MESSAGE a real help in these modern times.

Swansea, S. Wales

D. G. J.

Rules to Live By

Dear Sister:

We have much to work for, and if we ever hope to accomplish it, we will have much thinking and meditating to do. Too often our minds will wander to things that will harm us if we linger too long on them. We must take care, be watchful and stay far out of reach of all evil.

We must lift our minds to things that are noble and grand, seek to have our motives pure and unselfish.

La Feria, Texas

J. D.

AVAILABLE

Copies of *Music of the Heart*, as shown on the back cover.

Printed on dull coated paper, suitable for framing.

Price 25 cents each.

"IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS"

THE Scriptures are a storehouse of praise, of joy, of optimism. A study of the biographies of God's saints of old reveals that whether their temporal lot was prosperity or adversity, pleasure or pain, profit or loss, yet their lives were brimming with thanksgiving. Holy men and women became veritable fountains of praise to their Maker amidst an ungrateful and complaining world.

The Bible command enjoining thankfulness, includes every situation of life. Addressing the Thessalonian Church and all brethren in Christ who should follow after, Paul said, "In everything give thanks." There can be no misconstruing of this comprehensive four-word command; but lest we err in our interpretation of "everything," lest in any degree we narrow the scope of this term which is so broad as to embrace life in all its vicissitudes, let us look to the saints of old and analyze the causes which prompted them to offer unto God the sweet-smelling offering of thanksgiving.

Deliverance and Thanksgiving

At the divine summons, Noah came forth from the ark. Not a sign could be seen of the godless hordes who had populated the surrounding territory one year before. By virtue of his righteous life, only Noah with his family, who had believed in his mission, remained. His heart overwhelming with gratitude for the divinely wrought deliverance, Noah hastened to rear his thanksgiving memorial. On a broad flat stone he offered burnt offerings to the Preserver of life. Then, as in all cases of heartfelt thanksgiving, the beautiful token reached Heaven: "The Lord smelled a sweet savor."

Bounty and Thanksgiving

Jacob's weary years of asylum at his Uncle Laban's home had come to an end by divine decree. As he retraced his steps to Canaan, the land of his nativity, from Padan-aram whither he had fled twenty years before from the wrath of his brother, he lifted up his eyes and scanned the countryside. As far as the eye could see were there the flocks, the oxen and the asses which the Lord had granted him for years of faithful service to his uncle. Then, too, there were his wives and his offspring, his menservants and his womenservants. Jacob was moved to gratitude, and on the plains he paused to render thanks to the Giver of every good, saying:

"O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands."

Here is one of the choicest thanksgiving scenes which the Book portrays. The beauty of the scene was dependent upon two factors: God's mercy and Jacob's humility. If human humility had not been coupled with divine

mercy, no gratitude would have been expressed. Had Jacob been a man of lesser stature, he might have said, Mine own hands have gotten me these goodly possessions.

When all that we have is multiplied, who among us is humble enough to render thanks unto the Giver as was the noble Patriarch, Jacob?

Triumph and Thanksgiving

Tracing Jacob's posterity several hundreds of years, we see the vast Israelitish hosts on the farthestmost banks of the Red Sea, and we hear sounds of triumphant Hebrew melody. With uplifted rod, Moses and all the men of Israel, Miriam the prophetess and all the women with her, sing *en masse*:

"Sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone. Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?"

Though unquestionably the most notable, yet this was but one of many Red Seas known to Christian experience. To every child of God there comes a time in life—

*"Where, in spite of all that he can do,
There is no way out, there is no way back,
There is no other way but—through!"*

To retreat would be to surrender to the armies of Pharaoh, the flesh; to advance would exhaust human resources. The helplessness of the situation demands reliance upon the Eternal. . . . And on the farthestmost banks of that Sea many a lone yet exultant figure has lifted a song of praise to God for making a way through the floods of great waters.

Faith and Thanksgiving

Israel at the Red Sea teaches praise *after* deliverance. Now let us consider a historic example which is more difficult to emulate—praise *before* deliverance.

Jehoshaphat the king was informed that a great multitude purposed to invade his kingdom. When the two opposing forces advanced for combat, the enemy nations witnessed one of the strangest sights that ever greeted warriors on a battlefield. In advance of Israel's hosts marched a troop of singers appointed by the king to sing unto the Lord, to praise the beauty of holiness, to say, "Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever." Their song of praise was invincible strength, and Israel won the day.

Wherein lay the secret of the king's seeming audacious confidence which prompted him to put singers—and without armor—in advance of the army? Looking deeper into the narrative we find that before the encounter, Jehoshaphat had committed the cause into the hands of the Lord, who had assured their deliverance.

Let us likewise choose the Eternal for our Captain—He who never lost a battle—and, remember, we are not

weaponless as long as the song of praise remains in our hearts. Praise and thanksgiving are invincible strength which the hosts of sin cannot assail.

Penitence and Thanksgiving

This survey of ancient Thanksgivings would be incomplete without mention of David and his psalms. David was a many-sided man, with a character often at war with itself, a man with conflicting impulses, the flesh lusting against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. However, his capacity for penitence surpassed his oft-times unrestrained abandonment to carnal desire. Frequently he fled away and wandered; but always he retraced his steps to the altar of the Lord, there to pour forth his confession of guilt and his petition for mercy from on High. And, knowing David's heart, always the Lord heard and answered. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." It was for this grace, this long-suffering, this mercy which surpassed all human limitations, that David's thanks to God become perpetual.

Noteworthy among his thanksgiving psalms is the fortieth, which fairly throbs with emotional gratitude to the All-powerful Deliverer who had rescued him once more from another slough of carnality:

"I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: . . . Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."

Beings of flesh and blood in the midst of life's temptations—beings possessed of complexity of desire, of contradictory elements in moral character—have no difficulty in understanding the David of the Bible. Such men who have made the heaviest withdrawals upon God's long-suffering owe Him the largest debt of thanksgiving.

Loyalty and Thanksgiving

An apostate nation was now experiencing chastisement at the hands of a long-tolerant God. The holy city, Jerusalem, had been burned, the temple plundered, the walls broken down, and the Jews carried away captive to Babylon. There were those who hung their harps upon the willows and whose heart refused a song in a strange land; but not so with Daniel. Captivity may crush the spirits of ordinary men, but not such as his. The king had decreed that for thirty days none within his province should bend the knee to God or man, under penalty of death.

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."

In the face of death, he prayed and gave thanks to God. It would seem that such circumstances would exhaust any man's thanksgiving, but this noble man thanked God. An hour's reflection on the possible causes for his thanksgiving would be beneficial and enlarging to the soul.

Commemoration and Thanksgiving

The years of Captivity began and ended according to prophecy. After the return to their homeland, and the reclamation of their beloved city, the Book records one occasion of great joy. It was the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles, a harvest festival, as enjoined by Moses. According to stipulations, the people went forth into the mountains and cut down olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and made for themselves booths upon the roofs of their houses and dwelt therein for seven days. "And there was very great gladness" in Jerusalem.

A peculiar ceremony, this? Not so strange when its significance is understood! The Law of Moses clarifies the intent. It was to commemorate the beginnings of the wanderings in the Wilderness. All who were Hebrew-born were to dwell in booths seven days yearly to remind their generation that Israel's ancestors abode in tents for forty years after their exodus from Egypt.

We who are so highly favored above our predecessors may recall afresh how richly the Lord has blessed us, and "very great gladness" will swell our praise to God.

Submission and Thanksgiving

In our Perfect Example we have the deepest lesson in heartfelt thanksgiving. His crowning act in a life of unexcelled obedience was a beautiful blending of submission and adoration. Though He had power to call upon twelve legions of angels to deliver Him from the excruciating ordeal of crucifixion, yet, as in His entire life ministry, His was perfect submission to the Father's will. The final death agonies were entirely subordinated by sublimest praise, and from a soul wholly absorbed in divinity rang forth the phrase immortal:

"O God, the great God, how wonderful is Thy deliverance unto me!"

It may be that our hour of supreme suffering would likewise be cut short by a merciful Heavenly Father, inspiring our souls with those same noble words of adoration, if we possessed half the resignation to Divine Will which Christ manifested at Gethsemane and Golgatha.

Affliction and Thanksgiving

In the life of the Apostle Paul, nothing could suppress the keynote of thanksgiving. Cast him into prison, and from his unfettered soul comes forth music at midnight; bind him with chains, and from his unhampered mind comes forth the gospel to the confounding of kings; torture him with rods, and he cries, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment!"

Perhaps Paul's life philosophy as recorded in Romans 8:28 reveals the secret of his unquenchable spirits and irrepressible thanksgiving:

"We know that to those who love God, who are called according to His Plan, everything that happens fits into a pattern for good."

So confident was Paul of this fact—that every happening of life could be fitted into "a pattern for good"—that he gave "thanks always for all things unto God."

.

Thus we find that throughout all Biblical history the spirit of thanksgiving has held a central part in the religious expression of God's people. If they found their cup of blessing to be full and running over, how shall we begin to measure ours? Never in the long history of our race has so much been done for any people as for us of these last days.

Through a millennium and a half God sent His prophets and messengers, until the written Word was complete. For our sakes He preserved that Word through the Dark Ages, when it lay seemingly in the power of its enemies. For us He sent discoverers and explorers who fared forth to find and establish a New World, and superintended the preparation of a soil of freedom of thought and worship; for us He raised up a mighty instrument to bring to light His buried truth that we might walk in it. For us the heat of persecution has faded into the "cool of the day"; for us is prophecy being daily fulfilled before our eyes as evidence to produce faith; to us is promised a far greater reward if we complete our work by faith alone.

Are we really thankful? Do we show it? How? The nine lepers who were cleansed by our Lord were no doubt glad of their cleansing, but their poor way of showing it has forever marked them in history as ungrateful. For these special latter-day blessings should flow out our highest gratitude, not alone in prayers and praises, but in deeds of righteousness.

Our contribution to the spirit of thanksgiving of the ages is yet in the writing. As of today it is an open and unfinished chapter. But—in the deepest of heartfelt thankfulness it should combine the penitence, faith and humility, the submission, triumph and loyalty of all time for the unspeakable privilege that is ours to live in these twilight hours.

Our epoch is charged with the impact of prophecy made history, prophecy made current events, and prophecy pregnant with fulfillment.

The end of the age is upon us. The day of the Lord hasteth greatly. Let us wait patiently for it, working meanwhile with zeal and steadfastness, fixed purpose, and scrutinizing self-examination—lest it take us unprepared in some aspect.

Our history—and *what* shall it be?—is waiting to be written under the caption

Patience and Thanksgiving

THE INEVITABLE

I like the man who faces what he must
With step triumphant and a heart of cheer;
Who fights the daily battle without fear;
Sees his hopes fail, yet keeps unfaltering trust
That God is God, that somehow, true and just
His plans work out for mortals; not a tear
Is shed when fortune, which the world holds dear,
Falls from his grasp—better, with love, a crust
Than loving in dishonor; envies not,
Nor loses faith in God; but does his best,
Nor ever murmurs at his humbler lot;
But, with a smile and words of hope, gives zest
To every toiler. He alone is great
Who by a life heroic conquers fate.

—Sel.

"SATAN CAME ALSO"—

What Satan?

NOW there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them" (Job 1:6).

We are all familiar with the common belief of popular theology about Satan or the Devil. Let us rather study the Biblical facts and descriptions of the Devil.

Satan, in the Bible, represents anyone in opposition to God; for that is the meaning of the word.

Sin is an Opposer

Sin is the great opposer to God, and Paul represents sin as a master, and we, when we transgress, as his servants. "But God be thanked, that [though] ye were the servants of sin, ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. . . . For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? *for the end of those things is death*" (Rom. 6:17—21). Sin, personified and represented as a master luring all to eternal death and destruction, is the Satan or devil in the case, and all who break the law and walk in opposition to God are called Satan or devils.

In our natural condition, while disobeying the law of God, we are all servants or children of sin, and for that reason we are said to be children of the devil or Satan. That is what Jesus told those Jews who claimed to be Abraham's children. He said unto them: "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. . . . *Ye are of your father the devil*, and the lusts of your father ye will do. . . . He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God" (John 8:39, 44, 47). All who will not hear God's words but prefer to feed on their own thoughts, are, as Jesus said, children of sin, children of the devil. These are plain words, but they are the words of Jesus. We must speak the same.

The Apostle John spoke as did Jesus. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. . . . Little children, let no man deceive you: . . . *he that committeth sin is of the devil*; . . . In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil" (I John 3:4, 7, 8, 10). All who sin or transgress God's law are children of the devil, and all who obey the Almighty are His children.

Judas a Devil

Among the twelve disciples Judas was the devil in the case; for Jesus said to the Apostles, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John 6:70).

Satan Hindered — What Satan?

Paul once wrote to the Thessalonian brethren: "Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us" (I Thess. 2:18). No literal Satan from some infernal region hindered Paul in his

(Continued on page 8)

VOICES

from the Roll of the Book

A Virgin's Message

GREETINGS to Jehovah's worshipers of the latter day. What joy it gives me to have this opportunity to speak to you. Perhaps I can say something to encourage and strengthen you to perform even more diligently the will of the Eternal.

No doubt you have read about my father, Jephthah and me!* But would you not like me to relate to you again that greatest of all events in my life?

I was born in exile, and reared amid the wild scenes of desert life. I knew no protection but that of my father's tent. What sublime reverence for the Eternal One did my father instill into my mind when I was but a very young child! No parent was ever more tender and kind than was my father, Jephthah. He was all in all to me, and I was his dearest of earthly possessions, a comfort through every trouble.

Well do I recall the small but strongly fortified frontier town of Mizpeh, where my father brought me when he went to fight the Ammonites. I shall never forget that day when the whole land echoed with the triumphant shouts of freedom; when all the maidens and the older women assembled at our house to greet my victorious father; and how I, the happiest of them all, because my father was in command and would this day be first in Israel, danced forth with joy unbounded, radiant with timbrel and song. How I flew to embrace my father,

* While it is accepted almost universally that Jephthah, because of his vow, slew his daughter (Judges 11: 31-40), a careful study of the account reveals a beautiful experience. Jephthah vowed to God that if he was victorious in his military expedition, "whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, . . . shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering." The marginal reading is, "or I will offer it up." The issue depended upon who or what came out to meet him. If a person, he would consecrate him or her to the Lord, but if an animal, he would offer it up for a burnt offering.

When his daughter met him and heard of his vow she was ready and willing to consecrate her life to God. Then, after a period of two months in the mountains, or with high ones, she returned and Jephthah consecrated her to the Lord. Then, instead of following the usual custom of raising a family, etc., she remained single and devoted her time to the work of God.

We are told that the "daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah" (verse 40), but instead of "lament," the margin reads, "to talk with." This reveals that she still lived and was active in God's service.



whose face was flushed with victory!

Never shall I forget the change of his countenance at the sight of me! He was seized with dismay; all the triumphant glory died away, as he cried, "Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me; for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back."

Then how could I, as an obedient daughter, but answer: "My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon."

Now that the life I had once envisioned was gone, I needed strength to face such a crisis; and for two months I dwelt with those who could prepare me for Jehovah's service.

I begged my father not to grieve for me, for indeed I would be happy, even happier, since in the keeping thereof I knew I was fulfilling a sacred vow. I had longed to dwell apart from all that would chain my spirit to things short-lived and fleeting. I chose to dwell with those whose only thought was of Israel's God.

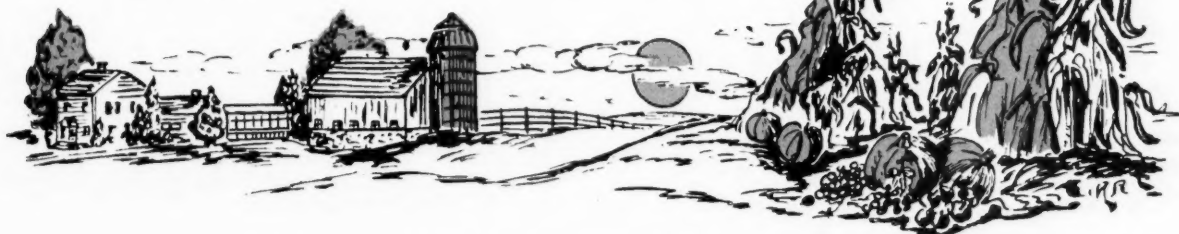
My faith grew with fresh understanding; a deeper meaning permeated my life. Here I would reach the height of spiritual development. My daily devotions proved to be a rock of sustaining strength.

And now it gives me joy to face a few eager and fearless ones, anxious to do God's will.

I know that many of you, my sisters here, must face some of the same problems I had in making my sacrifice. But do not feel that you are being left out of life, and that the whole wonderful procession passes you by, probably forever, while you are weeping behind bars. Look up, behold the blessing the Lord hath furnished, the nobility of the position which the Lord has promised His children!

The world cannot hold out to you a higher position than that of "kings and priests." There is no domain more ex-

GLEANINGS



NOTHING FREE?

Nothing free? Do you pay for the soft breeze blown to you on a suffocatingly hot day? For the magic of starlit heavens whose beauty is yours for lifting your eyes? The glory of a rising sun bringing you a new day filled with opportunity to live, love, and serve?

What of the bright little flowers that push their color through the mossy sod that man may be cheered by their beauty and fragrance? Or the feathery greenness of the trees about you in the summer? The marvel of a rainbow arched across the sky? The gorgeous colors of a sunset?

Is there any charge for the gold and red and bronze of autumn leaves? The scintillating loveliness that unrolls before your eyes when you behold the miracle of a soft whirling snowstorm or the beauty created by the icicles hanging from the trees?

But there is something far greater than all these free gifts, something likewise "without money and without price," and so wonderful that it makes other beauties and blessings seem insignificant by comparison. This is the greatest gift of all—the gift of God's wondrous truth, the faith which was once delivered to the saints—and by enriching our lives with this one true faith we shall be made worthy to enjoy the blessings of Eternity.

.....
"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above."

Ah yes, my friend, we need to get down on our knees and render thanks for the free gifts which overflow from the hand of a bounteous Giver.

tensive and more glorious than that of the Kingdom of God. The eternal future holds more riches than one could covet in this life. But alas, I have seen that it is none of these that are naturally coveted or desired. The natural mind does not want to wait until the Eternal God in His own good time will give it, but wants it now, right now!

It will take all of your mind, might and strength to cope with these temptations and trials by which you are surrounded.

Today you live in a do-as-you-please, say-what-you-please, go-where-you-please age. That dangerous spirit of indifference is catching; and if not on your guard, you will be gradually won over to their light and frivolous way of living. You will find that frequent meditation on Jehovah's life-giving words will keep you aware of the Eternal's presence.

November 17, 1956

O give me the joy of living,
And some glorious work to do;
A spirit of thanksgiving,
With loyal heart and true;
Some pathway to make brighter,
Where tired feet now stray;
Some burden to make lighter,
While 'tis day.

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

—Psalm 103: 1, 2.

Offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving.

—Amos 4: 5.

Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you.

—First Samuel 12: 24.

The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

—Psalm 16: 6.

Be ye thankful.

—Colossians 3: 15.

Tomorrow's blessings depend on our willingness to do God's will today.

He who receives a benefit should never forget it; he who bestows should never remember it.

Let's Count Our Blessings

Today, upon a bus, I saw a lovely child, . . . She was so happy and so free, . . . I thought, if I could but half as happy be. . . When suddenly she rose to leave, I saw her hobble down the aisle; . . . She had but one good leg, on the other a brace, . . . And as she passed—she gave us all a smile. . . . Let's count our blessings, you and I, . . . We have two good legs. Why should we sigh!

And then I stopped at the corner store, . . . A cheery old lady waited on me there. . . . I talked with her—she seemed so glad— . . . Though I was late—I lingered there. . . . And as I left, she said to me: "I thank you. . . . You have been so kind. . . . It was pleasant to have a talk with you, . . . You see," she said, "I'm blind." . . . Let's count our blessings, you and I, . . . We have two good eyes. Why should we sigh!

Later, walking down the street, I saw . . . A child with eyes of blue. . . . She stood and watched the others work, . . . It seemed she knew not what to do. . . . I stopped a moment, then I said: "Why . . . don't you join the others, dear?" . . . She looked ahead without a word, and . . . Then I knew—she could not hear. . . . Let's count our blessings, you and I, . . . We have two good ears. Why should we sigh!

With legs to take us where we'd go— . . . With eyes to see the sunset's glow— . . . With ears to hear the Truth anew— . . . Let's count our blessings, you and I, . . . We have no reason to complain—Why should WE sigh!

Your devotion to the Eternal will wither if it is not constantly renewed. All of you, regardless of social status or age, whether eight or eighty, are called upon to render a sacrifice equal to that of mine. It is to rise above yourselves and become encased in Truth, shutting out all the world that would take your mind off that future reward. It is to give your all!

If I had not willingly given up my life for the Cause, I could never have aided others.

And now, let me remind you that the Eternal One lovingly calls, "Come now and let us reason together. Behold I have set before you life and good, death and evil, therefore choose life that ye may live."

There are one hundred and forty-four thousand crowns held in store; one is kept for Jephthah's daughter. Shall one be for you?

"SATAN CAME ALSO"

(Continued from page 5)

travels. However, we read that forty wicked men vowed that they would neither eat nor drink until they had taken his life (Acts 23: 12, 13). In this instance and in many ways Satan hindered his progress, but the Satan was always wicked men.

Satan Cast Some into Prison — What Satan?

Jesus said: "The devil shall cast some of you into prison" (Rev. 2: 10). Who cast them into prison? The devil who cast John the Baptist into prison and beheaded him *was no less a personage than Herod the king* (Matt. 14: 3). Peter was also cast into prison (Acts 12: 1). Who cast Paul and Silas into prison? *Wicked men* (Acts 16: 19—24).

Satan Opposed Jesus — What Satan?

Because Peter opposed what He had said, Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan" (Matt. 16: 23). Peter was the Satan in the case because he *opposed the truth*.

These testimonies, and many more which we might use, plainly prove that in Bible phraseology the terms "Satan" and "Devil" are applied to men and women who oppose God and disobey His law.

With this knowledge we can understand easily what Satan is referred to in Job 1: 6, "There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them." It says in the margin from the Hebrew, "the adversary."

There was a Satan or adversary among the Apostles in the person of Judas. When the disciples met with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane that sorrowful evening before His cruel death and Judas came to betray Him, could they not have truly said, "and Satan came also"?

COMPROMISING

IN MATTERS of human relationship, where man deals with man, a compromise has often proved to be an effective tool to end a controversy. More than once in history, a compromise has pacified a wearisome conflicting issue. It has proved a golden means by which men have been able to resolve their differences peaceably, even though each party has argued and struggled rigidly for his own way.

Men have ever tried to use this same tool in dealing with God; but it has no weight or efficacy. God lays the law before us, saying in bold words, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Whether it conflicts with our ways to a greater or lesser extent, there can be no reconciliation except by our submission. We cannot steer a middle course or strike a balance in dealing with God. Appeasement can come only by our accommodation with His law.

Jesus taught that we must take the truth wholeheartedly into our lives, or else cast it out of our lips. He Himself called men to a giant undertaking—the complete renunciation of self. But men have always chosen the line

of least resistance. How much easier for man to intellectualize himself away from the plain doctrine, into complicated theories that would leave his old essential self alone! How much easier to sprinkle self with blood than to purge from the evils of the flesh! How much easier to give candles rather than the heart; to shave the head and retain the scheming privacy of the brain inside!

A modern historian suggests, in fancy, the experience of a resurrected Nazarene, who in life had known and followed His dusty and travelworn Master through the dry sunlight of Galilee. Being restored suddenly to this world, he visits a mass at St. Peter's in Rome. Behold His amazement to learn that the consecrated wafer was none other than his crucified Teacher!

Thus, man has ever compromised boldly with error.

We can readily see the folly of this vain endeavor in matters of doctrine and worship; but our concern must come closer home to our own restless hearts, to the unspiritualized areas in our own soul. Our old pagan nature is constantly at odds with that which we aspire to be. Although we know that peace can come only by truth, experience teaches us that half the truth lived out, and the other half shut out, can bring only half a peace. Can half a peace ever satisfy when it is fused with conflict?

There is nothing more frustrating than an irresolute man, oscillating between two feelings. If that man is one who has been taught that the road to peace is by single-mindedness, he is, in his inconstancy, indeed pitiable. There he stands with one hand reaching out to God, and the other hand avidly grasping for the things of the flesh. He recognizes the truth of the living God to be the Way to Life, and wants the *Life* but rejects the *Way*. By observing some faithful one he realizes that it is easier to go all the way than part; and yet he still tries to meet God at some halfway house. He is like the fool who waits to buy after the market has gone by. He learns that God holds in store vast treasures for him in exchange for his own little, vain substance; but he reacts as one who believes that God is bargaining with him to buy His wares on some easy-payment plan. In his own conceits, he evades the fully consecrated way, when actually he is engaging in a forlorn hope and running away from a reality which he shall some day have to face. He who trusts God with inward reservations is like a wave of the sea, carried forward by the wind one moment and driven back the next.

The religion of the world is watered down to suit the whims of modern man. Many have a vague aspiration for goodness without the will to implement it with sacrifice. The sincere milk of the word must not be adulterated. The living out of this word is closely linked with sacrifice every step of the way, and must never be watered down with our own whims and fancies.

Man is a strange bundle of emotions and impulses; a complex assortment of good and bad, weak and strong. If we realize that our natural ways are as trustworthy as an old broken crutch, we will resist the stubborn will to compromise with evil. We will want to be a true patriot to our country and hasten to make our position invulnerable. We will be so wearied of our defenseless position, that we will abhor our old practice of defying God's beautiful law and renew our allegiance to One Cause.

Since the man of divided loyalty is unstable at every turn, we conclude that true loyalty must replace incon-

stancy. If there is true loyalty, there will come a love of performance in the fear of God. Loyalty makes the thing to which you are loyal, yours. Disloyalty removes it from you. Completely effective Christian living comes by using all of our endowments, resources and talents to the ultimate limit in God's service.

One may experience moments of deep inspiration, being lifted to noble resolutions, only to go out and be confronted with a strong surge of temptation. This conflict in itself does not suggest disloyalty. Only the actual compromise with temptation—the yielding—produces sin and failure. Even though we have been created of the earth, earthy, yet by our own will we can aspire to the heavenly.

Why do we exploit the goodness of God, by being half and half, when our lives and our very breath are already in His hands to control as He chooses? Why do we choose contention when we can have peace and rest? Why do we linger on the brink of the precipice when we have been shown the tried and safe places? Why do we stand unarmed when God needs brave soldiers prepared for every emergency?

A man who, in reality, walks in the fear of God will have too much respect and reverence for His superior law to dare alloy it with his own notions. This man will steer safely through every stormy wind of temptation, coming through with flying colors, true-hearted, whole-hearted, faithful and loyal. He will keep his courage steadfast, his motives pure, and his trust fixed on God who provides the strength to endure.

"God, help us to choose the harder right, instead of the easier wrong, and never be content with half the truth, when the whole truth can be won."

My Gem

THIS is my day. A brand new day. It is a day that has never been lived in before. It is an uncut diamond from Time's eternal mine, presented to me by God for the purpose that I make the very best use of it. Because of the intrinsic value, I must do my best to set free the imprisoned beauty which this gem of today contains.

I wonder what God had in mind as He handed it to me. I wonder if I'll accomplish the purpose for which He is giving me this day.

What a serious undertaking, twenty-four hours entrusted to me to be lived to the extent of their greatest advantage and possibilities! If the setting sun does not behold my gem a growing thing of rare beauty, it shall be my fault, not the fault of the jewel.

Today I must work with a will. I must chip off patiently and carefully from my "diamond in the rough" all the sordid trifles that tend to cheapen it. Here a bit of envy or jealousy, there a bit of pride, sensitiveness or unkindness, or maybe some selfishness over here, or a thoughtless word there, must be polished away. Then there is the continual righting of the wrong and unruly thoughts that are constantly rushing through the mind; but whatever is marring the beauty of my gem must yield to the keen edge, the abrasive and the polishing, even though the process becomes trying, wearisome and painful at times.

I will not barter my precious gem, called "today," for

mere money, or for any shortlived carnal pleasure or satisfaction. I know if I were sure that Time would never hand me another diamond like it, that I should instantly see that there were not enough gold in all the world to buy it! I must cut my jewel so that its value will be beyond the purchase price of mere money. To accomplish this task, I must set my whole soul and spirit as well as my hands to the task.

A brand new day—a bundle of responsibilities—mine. I am anxious that my diamond day shall reflect all the beauty, sparkle and glitter of true holiness.

Tonight, Time will take from me my jewel of today.

Tonight, as I kneel before God to render my account to Him for the hours that He entrusted to me this morning, may they have proved to be a gem worthy of the best that is in me—worthy of having Him say to me, "My child, you've earned a brand new tomorrow for the way you've lived today."

Musings of the Editor

FOR centuries man's conception of an ideal future life in the Kingdom of God has been expressed in beautiful and glowing language. However, in most cases, the very keystone of the arch which would complete the connection between this world and the world to come has been conspicuously omitted. That keystone can be described briefly as good works or "overcoming the evil with the good." Obviously, speaking of the Kingdom does not make an overcomer; but, on the other hand is the undeniable fact that one who is overcoming will be speaking of the Kingdom.

Publishing the Tidings

The work of overcoming necessitates that the theme first seize the heart; cause the nerve to vibrate; permeate every fiber of our being. This condition can produce but one effect: the grand theme will find vent; it will spring forth, as it were, from every pore of our being; the rich perfume or fragrance will be diffused everywhere.

Human nature is so prone to focus undue attention upon the present and neglect the future that this command can scarcely be overdone, nor can the value to be derived from observing it be overestimated. The exchange of exhortation among those of like precious faith is a most wonderful aid toward overcoming.

Our work as a part of the feet of the body of Christ is to publish abroad the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God, to make truth available and attractive to others. We make it available in one way by our tongue; we make it attractive by our lives. Now when the Kingdom is so near at hand, do our lips and lives indicate it?

Charge not thyself with the sight of a year,
Child of the Master, trust, do not fear;
Choose not the cross for the coming week,
For that is more than He bids thee seek:
Bend not thine arms to tomorrow's load—
"Daily," only He says to thee—
"Take up thy cross and follow Me."

Meditations

On the Word

"And above all things, have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins" (First Peter 4:8).

"Above all things"—that makes it important, does it not? And since we are commanded to desire earnestly the best things (I Cor. 12:31), and since low aim is more ignoble than failure, we shall do well to seek and lay hold of this all-important "fervent charity," whatever it may prove to be.

Words change in meaning with the passage of the years, and the noble word "charity" has suffered grievously. Modern scholarship recognizes this, and today *agape* is always translated "love," a word which has also been badly battered by careless usage. As understood and intended by the Apostle, *agape* is the sum total of the Christian life, the bond of perfectness (Col. 3:14). Nineteen centuries later, *charity* has deteriorated to mere almsgiving; while *love* can mean anything at all, or nothing at all.

The dictionary comments: "*Love* may denote the sublimest and holiest spiritual affection, as when we are taught that 'God is love.' *Charity* has so far swung aside from this original meaning that probably it can never be recalled."

Yet even in good English speech today, there is a nuance of meaning which sets *charity* apart from related terms and exalts it to its proper position. This is most nearly approached when it is applied to our attitudes toward others. True charity is never sloppy sentiment: it makes no compromise with wrong, and excuses nothing which should not be excused. It may be roughly described as a willingness to give our brother the benefit of a doubt—at the very least to the extent that we give it to ourselves. This qualification, if honestly studied and practiced, will soon reveal to us the meaning of the poet's lament:

"O for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!"

There are sins of the spirit which are worse than sins of the flesh. It is infinitely easier to reclaim one who lapses into occasional sin under strong temptation than to eliminate a narrow, harsh, and bitter attitude toward life or toward others. Or hypersensitiveness, or suspicion, or self-pity, or egotism. These evils are hard to deal with, for the simple reason that almost no one will admit he has them. The other fellow—certainly, his failings are crystal-clear: his wrong attitudes as obvious as all outdoors. The suggestion that we condemn others for what we excuse in ourselves is positively insulting.

This, of course, is a picture of what charity is *not*.

We are Perfectionists, and we use the term without apology. The true Christian is of necessity a Perfectionist. When Jesus said, "Be ye therefore perfect," He meant just that, no less. When James wrote, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point,"

that is Perfectionism. No exceptions or short cuts are provided for. God's commandments are given for the purpose of being obeyed, and our salvation depends upon our obedience.

Yet we should face the fact that Perfectionism has its pitfalls, its peculiar temptations. Chief of these is Pharisaism, or legalism. We incline to compare ourselves with others. Outward "morality" may reflect inner virtue; or, better said, inner virtue always shows itself in external morality; but "morality," as short-sighted men see it, is by no means proof of virtue, which is an inner nobility of soul, a devotion to principle, a passion for all that is good. In other words, *charity*.

A man may pay his bills and taxes, obey the law of the land, never beat his wife or children, never steal or commit adultery, and yet be small, stingy, mean, cowardly, intolerant, harsh, eager to believe the worst. He is "moral" because he conforms to custom; but there is no charity, or love, behind it. Most discouraging of all, he is usually so well satisfied with his "progress" that he will not look within and begin the work where it should and must begin, with the cleansing of the secret heart and the cultivation of the spirit of Jesus of Nazareth, which was, first and last, grounded in humility.

This sort of person is distressingly familiar. Any one of us at this moment can think of half a dozen of our neighbors who are like that. But ourselves—!

The same Apostle who so glowingly recites in First Corinthians 13 the attributes of Christian charity, gives us an example of its practical operation: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

Sentimentality, or pseudo-charity, would substitute "excuse" or "conceal" for *restore*; but, as before stated, true charity does not compromise with sin. The "fault" must be eliminated, so that it may be forgiven, but with no harshness or feeling of superiority. Knowledge of our own weaknesses will make us partners, not masters and servants, in a co-operative enterprise—the quest for perfection of character, each helping his brother and receiving help—even asking for it. He who has never sinned or needed help—where is he?

Our humility should grow in proportion to our self-knowledge; and it will. Only the self-deceived will say, even in mind, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are: extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." Only the small of soul and void of charity will say, even by attitude, to a striving brother or sister, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou."

So intent have we been on the pursuit of the noun, that we have almost forgotten the adjective: "fervent." Bible charity is certainly not emotional, yet it has emotional overtones and undertones. Not only the intellect but the affections and the emotions must be reached and controlled and put to work. The true Christian is never a "cold fish," hard and unemotional; but warm-hearted, filled with a spiritual glow, "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," ever ready to "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." The love of God is to keep His commandments (I John 5:3), and one of the chief of these commandments is to "love one another with a pure heart fervently" (I Peter 1:22). This is more

(Continued on next page)

Your Questions Answered



BIBLICAL PERSONAL CURRENT

Do you have a question? Personal replies to Biblical questions will be sent to any correspondent, and counsel will be offered on problems pertaining to the spiritual life. The MEGIDDO MESSAGE will publish only the most helpful discussions for the benefit of other readers. No names shall be mentioned.

Do you think God approves of the gorging that is prevalent at Thanksgiving celebrations?

No, He does not. The rules given by Him, "Let your moderation [or power of self-control] be known unto all men," and "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," allow of no violation.

Feasts are lawful—the Bible records many such feasts of thanksgiving and rejoicing—but never to the violation of any Bible principle of self-control.

Unfortunately, today Thanksgiving for the most part has lost its original meaning, either of Bible times or of Puritan history, of praising the Giver of all blessings; and never were there so many temporal blessings to give thanks for as today. Instead, the pagan idea of satisfying the animal cravings predominates.

I have never been able to understand the doctrine of foreordination or predestination. Could you help me?

The Apostle Paul gives us a clear explanation of God's foreordination, in Eph. 2: 10. He ordained of old that we should walk in good works. And in Rom. 8: 29, 30 He predestined us to be conformed to the image of His Son, to follow His example, to put on the characteristics of the Lord Jesus (I Pet. 2: 21; Rom. 13: 14). That is His will for us; but He leaves us free to choose—"If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve" was Joshua's declaration (Joshua 24: 15).

God never predestined one person to life and another to death, unconditionally—but established the inflexible standard, "obey and live, disobey and die." He leaves the choice to us. He invites us to His service and specifies the terms; if we do the work then we are justified (Rom. 2: 13). Those who are justified will become glorified, with a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory (II Cor. 4: 17).

Would you kindly explain Matt. 23: 9, "Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven"?

A study of the verses in this connection makes it clear. Jesus was referring to the class who sit in Moses' seat. In other words, *teachers*, who do "all their works . . . to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi" (vs. 5-7). They were not humble like our Master, but all was for show and honor. They are not the ones to be revered. We do not have to look far to see that same class today—those who are proud and love to show their fine robes and receive honor of men. Jesus' following words show that was what He was condemning: "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (vs. 11, 12).

No one is father in the sense God is; but the Scripture is plain in the use of the term for one who meets the qualifications. The Apostles referred to Abraham as "fa-

ther" (James 2: 21; Rom. 4: 11). Paul spoke of Timothy as his son. He also wrote, "Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (I Cor. 4: 14, 15). The followers of the advanced instructor in truth were many times referred to as "children," "little children," etc., indicating the relationship of a father in the faith.

Cremation and embalming of the body has always seemed to be cruel—do you think it is right? If so, how would the resurrection be possible?

The inhumed body is oxidized slowly; the cremated body rapidly; but the end result is the same—ashes to ashes, dust to dust. There is no consciousness in death; the dead "know not anything" (Eccl. 9: 5, 10). They are beyond the feeling of pain. Embalming helps in the preservation of the body until burial. We have the example in the Bible of its being done. The faithful Joseph commanded his servants to embalm his father, Jacob (Gen. 50: 2). Of course they used a different method than is used today, for the Egyptian method of embalming preserved the bodies indefinitely.

The resurrection is just as possible from a cremated body as from one that had been burned in a fire or drowned in the sea. The living body is constantly changing as its cells are renewed, yet the personality is not altered; so that there is no such thing as retaining an original body. If our names are "written in the Lamb's book of life," we need have no fears, regardless of the fate of our mortal remains, for the Creator of our bodies is able to re-create them, that we may "all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body" (II Cor. 5: 10).

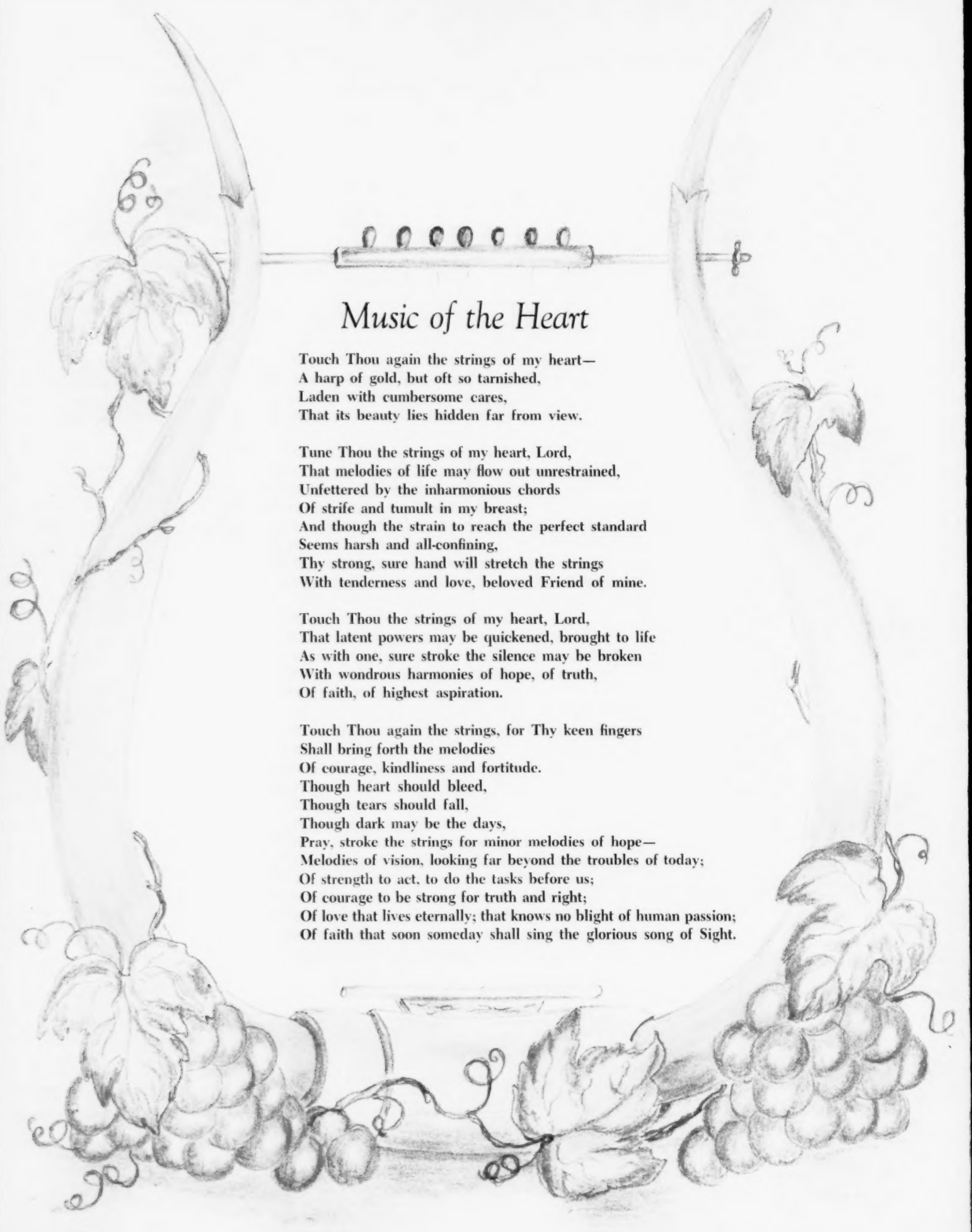
Do Psalm 66: 12 and Job 20: 6 teach that there were people in Bible times who could fly?

No. The Psalmist had no reference to anyone flying overhead. He simply referred to their enemies who had dominion over them and put them through severe afflictions. The testimony in Job simply refers to man's own exalted opinion of himself.

MEDITATIONS ON THE WORD, conc.

than a cold intellectualism: it is *agape*, brotherly love, the unity of the body of Christ.

It is charity, and not a human sacrifice or the shedding of literal blood, which alone can cover our multitudinous sins. It covers them by forgiveness, by wiping them out, by teaching us to overcome and eliminate them. The principle is eternal, that "he that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Prov. 28: 13). A barren legalism is no help, for it only begets further sin—the sin of pride. The new wine cannot be contained in the old bottle; a "new heart and a new spirit" (Ezek. 36: 26) are necessary. When these are attained, when there is a complete abhorrence of sin, a complete recognition of the weakness and sinfulness of our nature, a sufficiently deep hunger and thirst after righteousness, and an all-consuming desire for eternal life, the goodness of the tree will inevitably be reflected in the goodness of its fruit.



Music of the Heart

Touch Thou again the strings of my heart—
A harp of gold, but oft so tarnished,
Laden with cumbersome cares,
That its beauty lies hidden far from view.

Tune Thou the strings of my heart, Lord,
That melodies of life may flow out unrestrained,
Unfettered by the inharmonious chords
Of strife and tumult in my breast;
And though the strain to reach the perfect standard
Seems harsh and all-confining,
Thy strong, sure hand will stretch the strings
With tenderness and love, beloved Friend of mine.

Touch Thou the strings of my heart, Lord,
That latent powers may be quickened, brought to life
As with one, sure stroke the silence may be broken
With wondrous harmonies of hope, of truth,
Of faith, of highest aspiration.

Touch Thou again the strings, for Thy keen fingers
Shall bring forth the melodies
Of courage, kindness and fortitude.
Though heart should bleed,
Though tears should fall,
Though dark may be the days,
Pray, stroke the strings for minor melodies of hope—
Melodies of vision, looking far beyond the troubles of today;
Of strength to act, to do the tasks before us;
Of courage to be strong for truth and right;
Of love that lives eternally; that knows no blight of human passion;
Of faith that soon someday shall sing the glorious song of Sight.

Y
4
C

1
5
C
X